

Summer Wildlife Walks in Gedling Country Park—June

The third of these walks on **June 4th** was lead once again by Jenny Fillingham, with running commentary by Mark Tyler. Another cool cloudy morning produced only one Common Blue male butterfly warming up



Male Common Blue



4-banded longhorn beetle



Rhogogasper viridis fly

on the ground, but we found several insects up and about, including these two left. Later on, over the west side of the



Caterpillar on jacket



Wild strawberries

Park, this caterpillar took a fancy to Marian's jacket. Thousands of wild strawberries here were just turning red, promising an abundant crop this year. Wild roses glowed pink faces to us, whilst bird's foot trefoil demonstrated its 'egg and bacon' heritage.



Wild Roses



Bird's foot trefoil



Tufted vetch

We also spotted tufted vetch, a riot of oxeye daisies and scores of bees hard at work. The walk neared its end at the reed pond where Jenny pointed out the Friends' work in clearing reeds and deepening the pond has already allowed more bird life and dragonflies to flourish.



By the reed pond



By the **29th June**, this extraordinarily hot English summer was well on its way. Walking down to the reed pond, it was abundantly clear to us that butterflies were making the most of the warm sunshine. Ringlets were especially common (155 of them on the day!), with at least 20 unidentified Whites added to 2 Large and 4 Small. Down towards the bottom ponds, Small Skippers, Meadow Browns and Gatekeepers appeared. No sign of Large or Essex Skippers, but by then at the ponds we were surrounded by dragonflies and damselflies.



Ringlet butterfly



Four-spotted Chaser

Twelve Black-tailed Skimmers, nine Four-spotted Chasers, one male Banded Demoiselle, twelve Emerald Damselflies (rarely seen here), one each Brown and Southern Hawker. Common Darters were—well, common—with one Ruddy Darter showing its more scarlet colouring. Out-numbering them all were the countless male Common Blue Damselflies, visible everywhere.



Small Skipper butterfly



Down beside the bottom pond a Grey Heron stood in immobile ambush for fish or frogs. More unexpected were four Small White butterflies clustered together on the marshy bank. This is known as 'mud-puddling' where the males acquire salt and other minerals they need for successful mating.



Grey Heron

The next wildlife walk is at 10.00 am on Friday 27th July, with another added also at 10.00 am on 10th August. Join us for a fascinating wildlife walk!